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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/700,761	11/04/2003	James D. Carper	100-00222	6335

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EXAMINER

MATZEK, MATTHEW D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1771

DATE MAILED: 07/20/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/700,761

Applicant(s)

CARPER ET AL.

Examiner

Matthew D. Matzek

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-66 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-66 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/25/05, 6/20/05
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-11, drawn to a laminate, classified in class 442, subclass 59.
- II. Claims 12-38, drawn to an absorbent article with a fastening system, classified in class 604, various subclasses.
- III. Claims 39-49, drawn to a method of making an absorbent article with a fastening system, classified in class 156, various subclasses.
- IV. Claims 50-66, drawn to a method of making a laminate, classified in class 156, various subclasses.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

1. Inventions I and II are related as mutually exclusive species in an intermediate-final product relationship. Distinctness is proven for claims in this relationship if the intermediate product is useful to make other than the final product (MPEP § 806.04(b), 3rd paragraph), and the species are patentably distinct (MPEP § 806.04(h)). In the instant case, the intermediate product is deemed to be useful as apparel, surgical drapes or protective covers and the inventions are deemed patentably distinct since there is nothing on this record to show them to be obvious variants. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions anticipated by the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

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2. Inventions I and III are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions The method of making taught in invention III uses the finished laminate of invention I.

3. Inventions IV and I are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the method disclosed in instant claim 50 of laminating two layers together may be used to laminate a metal foil to a thermoplastic layer for use as an insulative layer for clothing.

4. Inventions III and II are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the method of applying a fastening member to the absorbent article taught in claim 39 may be used to fasten a garment to the absorbent article resulting in a materially different product.

5. Inventions II and IV are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions because the method of invention IV does not teach the incorporation of an absorbent article.

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6. Inventions III and IV are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions teach the creation of laminate and the application of the finished laminate to an absorbent article.

7. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

8. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

9. During a telephone conversation with Thomas Wozny on 7/12/2005 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-11. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 12-66 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

10. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Carroll et al. (US 2002/0019187).

a. Carroll et al. teach a breathable composite sheet material comprising a thermoplastic film adhered directly to a fibrous substrate. The disclosed article has peel strength of at least 0.1 N/cm (~26 g/inch, conversion done by Examiner) (Abstract). The fibrous substrate is preferably a breathable polyolefin nonwoven web [0028]. The porous film of Examples 8-17 may be made of a modified polypropylene or an anhydride modified ethylene vinyl acetate [0135].

b. Although Carroll et al. does not explicitly teach the claimed feature of shear strength of greater than 4 hours, it is reasonable to presume that said property is inherent to Carroll et al. Support for said presumption is found in the use of like materials (i.e. a laminate comprising a nonwoven polyolefin web and a polyolefin film). The burden is upon Applicant to prove otherwise. *In re Fitzgerald* 205 USPQ 594. In addition, the presently claimed property of shear strength of greater than 4 hours would obviously have been present one the Carroll et al. product is provided. Note *In re Best*, 195 USPQ at 433, footnote (CCPA 1977) as to the providing of this rejection made above under 35 USC 102.

12. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Mathis et al. (US 2004/0224596).

a. Mathis et al. teach a breathable barrier comprising a first nonwoven layer and a first microporous film (Abstract). The nonwoven layer may be made of polyolefin [0020]. The film layer may be made of polyethylene, polypropylene and ethylene vinyl acetate and mixtures thereof [0026-27].

b. Although Mathis et al. does not explicitly teach the claimed feature of shear strength of greater than 4 hours and peel strength of 1000 g/inch, it is reasonable to presume that said property is inherent to Mathis et al. Support for said presumption is found in the use of like materials (i.e. a laminate comprising a nonwoven polyolefin web and a polyolefin film). The burden is upon Applicant to prove otherwise. *In re Fitzgerald* 205 USPQ 594. In addition, the presently claimed property of shear strength of greater than 4 hours and peel strength of 1000 g/inch would obviously have been

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present one the Mathis al. product is provided. Note *In re Best*, 195 USPQ at 433, footnote (CCPA 1977) as to the providing of this rejection made above under 35 USC 102.

13. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Gardner et al. (US 2002/0071944).

a. Gardner et al. teach a laminate of a nonwoven web layer and a breathable film layer (Abstract). The layers of the laminate may be made from polyethylene, polypropylene, ethylene vinyl acetate and mixtures thereof [0020-21].

b. Although Gardner et al. does not explicitly teach the claimed feature of shear strength of greater than 4 hours and peel strength of 1000 g/inch, it is reasonable to presume that said property is inherent to Gardner et al. Support for said presumption is found in the use of like materials (i.e. a laminate comprising a nonwoven polyolefin web and a polyolefin film). The burden is upon Applicant to prove otherwise. *In re Fitzgerald* 205 USPQ 594. In addition, the presently claimed property of shear strength of greater than 4 hours and peel strength of 1000 g/inch would obviously have been present one the Gardner al. product is provided. Note *In re Best*, 195 USPQ at 433, footnote (CCPA 1977) as to the providing of this rejection made above under 35 USC 102.

Double Patenting

14. Claims 1-11 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 21-34 of copending Application No. 10/981,046. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not

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patentably distinct from each other because both the instantly disclosed article and the applied application are drawn to a laminate comprising a nonwoven layer and a polyolefin cling film layer.

15. This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

16. Claims 1-11 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 21-34 of copending Application No. 10/867,438. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both the instantly disclosed article and the applied application are drawn to a laminate comprising a nonwoven layer and a polyolefin cling film layer.

17. This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

18. Claims 1-11 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-7 of U.S. Patent No. 6,475,932. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both the instantly claimed invention and that of the applied art are directed to breathable laminates.

Conclusion

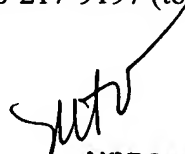
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew D. Matzek whose telephone number is (571) 272-2423. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on (571) 272-1478. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

mdm


NORCA TORRES
PRIMARY EXAMINER